Informer: LMP-S13 **Spanish**
Date: 2-18-02 **Mini DV**
Interviewer: Claudia Hernandez
Transcriber: J. Dominguez

S13: …(inaudible)…

CH: Ok, one of his thought…(inaudible)…Ok, we wanted to start with alcoholism (alcholismo), if you could tell me what you think about it?

S13: It has various ramifications. Some say it's hereditary, others say it's due to socio-economic situation but through my studies I have found it to be a sickness, that is caused by many different reasons whether it be social, personal, for various reasons they can get that.

CH: So you have known someone that has struggled with alcoholism?

S13: Yes, I've known people that have gone treatment for alcoholism and drug addiction because many times alcoholism takes people to drug addiction and they begin to take other things than alcohol and so this is a serious situation, to either control or to take to a rehabilitation center. This is now difficult because the person will desire it. What many people with alcoholism have had is that they have been cured but they have received their situation by way of other causes or motives, it's a strong and grave problem, it's a big problem in different stages and in different social levels, because it's not just a problem with the Latino or the Anglo-Saxon but it's something that is universal in any race, everyone has a drug or a problem.

CH: Do you know some method of rehabilitation?

S13: Well, with having the knowledge I don't, but I do know that there are many organizations, many people that through religious paths or saintly path, many people have re-established themselves. There are some cases that have been treated spiritually but they have been special cases, they've had some spiritual case that has taken them to alcoholism, that has taken them to their personal destruction, so we've done some spiritual things in order to rescue them back from whatever demon, so alcoholism has lots of ramifications and it's something very strong to work against, it's a long therapy and a long process.

CH: And how do you know if the person has a spiritual problem or a family problem?

S13: Well you do it through certain studies that you can do depending on the person, because they will know if it is spiritual or familial or it is economical if it is any type of situation, it's a bit difficult, many times the people in the religion will know the problem and they comment on what they can do, whether to give counsel or to see what is happening with you. And that's how a person comes here and that is how you find out what is wrong with them, whether it is spiritual, economic, incomprehension by the

family or marital, this how you can come to know it, but people that get to this medium that don't get to the places designed for these problems, then they are ignoring a problem that can be resolved.

CH: Its acceptable in your cultural spirit to intervene in someone's life? Not intervene but not in a way to tell them what to do but, like lets say I had a problem with alcohol would it be acceptable in our circle of friends that you or someone else …(inaudible)…have this problem?

S13: yes its acceptable because you can make an appointment, you can make an investigation, converse with the person to see what problem they might have or what they are going through and that is where we can focus on the problem, perhaps a the problem is being caused by a uncontrollable spiritual situation, maybe a situation that you can not control, maybe you are trying to resolve a situation that you don't know how to control and there we can focus on the problem and the situation the person might have and we can advance and find a solution.

CH: ok, we were talking about if you knew some place, no, about intervention and if it's acceptable within the culture?

S13: Intervention is acceptable because many people are disoriented completely. There are difficult situations in the family, work and so the person is disoriented completely, many people feel pushed aside, many time their status, socially and economic, the person feels as if they have nowhere to turn, without help, without knowing where to look for help, but there are many places that do help. But the environment was they reside influences a lot in the person's behavior, in destabilizing and in incorporating in society as a normal person.

CH: When a person suffers from alcoholism, how do they…how do you…well what type of personality does someone have when they are an alcoholic? Or how do they act when they are in social environment? When a person is drinking what is OK and what is the limit for when they go over?

S13: Its variable on the individuals system. There are some people that can drink a huge quantity of alcohol and they have no big effect and there are people that with 1 or 2 drinks they don't know their own name. Other people with two drinks fall asleep because their system, well it depends on how their system accepts alcohol. So its very important to know that any type of alcohol is (*nocivo*), when we drink it in excess…if they are not used to drinking alcohol well your character changes completely, there are people whose personality becomes aversive and there are those that become jovial and friendly or they become a very shy person when they drink and some become social and very happy they talk with everyone. Some become secluded some begin to cry others are happy, so these are changes that are not expected with the alcohol consumed.

CH: Talking about the spiritual problems that people might have is there an example that you could give me? About a problem that someone could have spiritually?

S13: In many cases we are going to use the example of someone who knows nothing of the spiritual. A normal person leads their normal life and they begin to feel a bit weird, their way of being towards the family and the person does not realize the changes, because alcoholism…well, by being an alcoholic you are the last one to know that he is has a problem, he thinks he's fine, he does not accept that he has this, he thinks he is fine. But the family begins to notice that the person is not the same, he is not the same in the waking hours, that he does not return home around the same time, he is having problem with the family. If he was person that spoke very slowly before know he is someone that gets agitated when you speak to him or he does not want to maintain an educated, descent conversation, so then the friends and coworkers note that his comportment is not the same, that if he was someone that came in early now he is in late, if he where the type to stay late now he wants to leave early, he is the person who's comportment begins to change, so everyone begins to notice the change except the affected person, because they have the problem they don't have the time to realize it, they think everything is perfect and so if there is a person in there circle that knows about spirits or spirituality, well this person will approach them, of course they have to agree with each other, because they are never in agreement when it comes to needing help. They feel that they are correct and the person without the problem is wrong and this is where one should take it on themselves, so long as the person is in agreement. If it is the beginning of the alcoholism, because there are stages you know, there is the beginning there are people that are a little more advanced and there are those that are far gone in it, they have to go to a program…and everything you use with them has to be bit more aggressive, the treatment has to be stronger, the medicine has to be stronger, which is different than for the person that is starting their alcoholism and so there is more opportunity in someone who is just starting their alcoholism than one who is far gone in it. There are some that are in different stages, 50, 80, 70, 2 percent into it, and they get sick accordingly. Some overdose and come lose to death. So one should be able to tell what stages they are in, in order to get help them out of it. The family plays a very important role in reestablishing the person, not so much with alcoholism but in any other sickness. If a sick person in a hospital doesn't see their family they get depressed and the medication does not work as effectively. It does not work the same as when the family worries and asks about him, they make him feel important, they know its necessary, so then the medicine begins to work. So then the person feels needed and they begin to fight to get ahead. So alcoholism is the same, with support from the family, the family's caring is important. You should not lay blame on him or point-fingers; you should not look for someone to blame but for help. Look for people that support, that cares, people that are willing to take that road with them, in order to bring them out ahead.

CH: is there a remedy that uses herbs that you could recommend to someone for alcoholism?

S13: Yes there are many there is a big number of things that you can do for people, but I would say that you have to look for a person with the exact knowledge of what was given to the person who is ill. Because one should know the history for the person, you have to see the reaction of the body, what degree of gravity is their alcoholism and what situations caused the alcoholism, because you might be giving a home remedy, an

alternative medicine and it might conflict with other situations. The person might tell you they are an alcoholic and that they only drink beer when they be drinking something more that beer, like liquor or some pills or maybe some drug that could come to not mix well with an alternative medicine. There could be some sort of poisoning in the blood or some sort of change in the persons conduct. So you have to investigate fully where the alcoholism is coming from and why, and why the person is in it and what has provoked their alcoholism so then to look for an expert. It might be spiritual but you need to find an expert in the material alcoholism, that is who should help that person. One should always look for the alternatives to get the person out of badness. I cant just cure like that, I have to know the persons history, you have to know the processes through which that person is going through, so when we have all those arguments, then we will see what this person really needs and what is the adequate thing to do to help them in this situation.

CH: What type of physical problem does alcoholism cause to people?

S13: There are many physical things that happen like the memory. Memory does not function like it should the person can no longer control there way of being, the things they do. Also their liver (higado), a principal organ of the body, due to the alcohol that it receives, that alcohol gradually kills it and hardens it, so it's a plant that if you put water on it with vitamins on it, then that is the opposite of that effect. We are adding chemicals to kill it and so there comes a time that it does not receive the irrigation of the water or the vitamins but only toxins. If you are receiving only toxins then it begins to harden and stops working. The body begins to retain certain liquids that do not leave the body and that person can come to having swellings due to the water retention. His kidneys begin to lose their shape because they don't receive the desired water and they begin to have problems in the kidneys and the heart also suffers because the blood contains certain toxins that he cannot eliminate, so the machinery is not working the way it is supposed to.

CH: So a big part of the organic system is affected?

S13: yes, your vision also the person can ingest alcohol and with it toxins or drugs and so the brain becomes affected and so the person can go and lose part of their memory, they begin to lose control all control of their personality and there comes a time when they take an auto and they get into an accident because they don't know where they are, their mind…their computer, if you will, does not say where they are, they don't know how to act or how to continue.

CH: Do you believe that alcoholism affects, men, women, and young people or is there a difference?

S13: there is no difference because alcohol is alcohol. We must always know at what degree the alcohol is at, whether it be a man woman a young person or a young person. If it is a person that has problems with diabetes, or problems with the liver, heart or brain. Alcohol will have a strong effect on this type of person because they can't control it. In a woman, if it is a woman that is pregnant, that alcohol will affect two people, her fetus and herself and so the alcohol in any type of sphere is a bad for your health. So, doctors

recommend that the body need a small portion of alcohol but that is just a small measurement. In young people it also affects them because there personality changes, they stop being themselves because they become a completely different person. So, you will have youth that drink and then they end up pregnant because of some unexpected attitude due to alcohol. So there can be the case of an unwanted presence and they are obviously not prepared for that. Alcohol also lends itself to rapes, to unexpected or unwanted actions. So, it's a problem that encompasses many different people and things, youth, work…it umbrellas all of these. It's a strong sickness.

CH: Are there more women than men alcoholics?

S13: Well, there are statistics that say that there are more men and there are some that say there are more women, that's all correlative. There are some levels where they match each other in numbers, but in general they say that men drink more than women. But, there are some women that drink more than men, but that depends on the country, education and all that has to do with the personal format of the person.

CH: And my last question on alcoholism is if you think it is genetic?

S13: Many people believe that because their dad drank then that is why they drink. Many times familial behavior affects the behaviors of a generation, "because my dad drank I have to be like my father." They are thinking they want to be like the dad but they are not thinking of the consequences that can occur by following in their dad's footsteps. Or the same with the mother, but we have to recognize the consequences that we are taking up.

CH: Ok, so we are done with the Alcohol. Now we can ask about sweet plants and other plants.

J: Is there just a few more minutes or do you want to quit now?

CH: Well I wanted to ask if he went to Mexico in August or September, I need to know if INAUDIBLE…and also you were going to treat some people and why don't you ask him about both of those, first the treatment of people and if you recall what some of the ailments were that people had and how where you able to treat them, how where they treated by other people as well.

CH: You remember you told us you went to Mexico?

S13: Yes

CH: You told us that you had gone to a place where they say it is for witches in Mexico…that is where you had the friend (female) that was sick?

S13: Yes.
CH: Could you talk to us a bit of the experience, what she had and how you helped her?

S13: Yes, in that trip to Mexico on the September 11th, I went to see a person who was sick. They took me to a place where many witches go to cure. Here…Santeria is very different to spiritism, these people cure with there idols by invoking the spirits with fire, by way of incense and herbs, so these are experiences that one is not used to seeing. These people have rock altars; many of the them make their ceremonies near rivers and others near volcanoes, or in the very caves where they keep their idols and beliefs. It was an experience to be able to see how these people, who have no type of utensils or anything, it was all really rustic, they would prepare the juices of the very plants and they would make their own beverages, their own infusions to use on people. So in giving the people the infusion…with that they would paint the body, they would make it float so that it would work on the outside as well as in the inside, the same energy everywhere. They would put this person on the ground and they would arrange the plants around him and the utensils and raising this person to certain spiritual levels, that only by being there you can describe it, so it's a strong experience and you learn a lot because they show you how they do they curing and this lady had a (INAUDIBLE) they were going to operate her for 'kidney stones' (calculo rinal) and this lady was 7 days with them, where they would give her beverages that they themselves had prepared. At the end of the 7 days there where certain changes that occurred, she no longer was tired, her face was not as pale, she had the desire to eat. After cleansing her, with plants, nothing chemical, it wasn't anything that we could say it was medicine, just alternative medicine, and the herbs. This person expunged from her bad all the bad things she had in her body and this person when we returned to Mexico City they recommended that she keep taking the herbs they had prepared for her and to go to the doctor. And so she waited a week, after the seven days we went to the doctor, I went because I wanted to know the progress and when they did the analysis of the kidneys and they said she had no more stones in her system…they had disappeared and she was healthy and clean. So alternative medicine does work, but it works when you give it in doses that are prescribed, not just anyone can prepare a plant without knowing the plant. So it has to be someone that has some sort of experience with the plants, or has studied those plants. There are many people have studied botany and have the experience of knowing what it is good for and what it's not. When I was with these people…they are people that live in rural areas, with little resources but have great experience with botany, with medicinal herbs, in knowing the human body and its symptoms, like stomach aches and how to remove that sickness, it's not spiritual but they say it is and it's something you have to see the doctor about, so these are people that have a great knowledge and have lots of mystery and are mysterious and they teach there secrets and ones only that they know and use to get to their conclusions. It was a great experience to be there.

CH: Did she continue taking her prescribed remedy?

S13: Yes, she continued and she there and she are totally cured now.

CH: How is it that you know her? Some friend of yours?

S13: I met her here in Los Angeles; I did lots of things for her. Lots of Spiritual things that she needed and they all went well so when she was in Mexico she began to show

those symptoms and so I took advantage of the fact that I was going there and I accompanied her there, because she also did not want to go there alone, so I accompanied her to see how the situation worked.

CH: And so you went there for vacation?

S13: It wasn't like a vacation but to get to know certain places, in order to go do things with the religion with people that I know. So it also helped me to interchange experiences that we've had, because we are in the same field, in the same situation. I studied methods and beliefs, they may not be the same but they are similar and they strive for the same purpose, their final purpose is the same, you know to cure and to resolve with alternative medicine, which are the very plants themselves.

CH: And what part of Mexico is where these people are?

S13: Well these people are in San Juan de Dios, that's close to Jalisco and Guadalajara, it's the part where there are many indigenous people and they dedicate themselves to cure people and all that.

J: What plants did he learn about to use for what illnesses?

CH: In Mexico? Did you learn of any new plants over there in Mexico?

S13: Yes (la dama de plantas) is huge, they have different names, different functions. Here we could use a plant for a cold and there they might use it for inflammation and it's the same plant. What here perhaps may work for something else…I brought much information from them, the plants are very different.

CH: Do you want to stop here?

S13: Yes.

TAPE PAUSES AND INTERVIEW IS MOVED TO DIFFERENT LOCATION

S13: …I am going to take it all out so that you can see all that I brought. I am going to expose it all out.

CH: So that you can put names on them?

S13: Yes, they all have their name and everything. I brought all that I could bring. For next time I'll take everything out and put the names out and what you do with it and how you prepare it, everything.

CH: I didn't bring it I thought I had…
J: (Sigh)

S13: It's very hard to do.

CH: You can tell

S13: It's an enormous job, when you do the whole video; you know when edited it will look real good.

CH: Mm huh

PICTURES BEING TAKEN

J: …Photographs pretty soon.

CH: Lazaro?

J: Yes

CH: Where do you want him to be?

J: Well let me get some more close-ups and then…(sigh)

CH: And that little doll is that the Chango's sister?

S13: No, that's Aina (*not sure on sp.*). It's fire, she goes before Chango, and she is the representation of Fire.

S13: It is important to teach people about this; so that they are not ignorant and think that this is diabolic, so that there is knowledge.

CH: Yes. And the Turtle shells do they have significance?

S13: it is Chango's shield. It's his shield and in the future in can be an Elegua…the shell. I also INAUDIBLE.

CH: yes I remember I saw her.

J: That's it I need to go…

INTERVIEW PAUSES AND PICTURES ARE TAKEN

S13: If you want I'll bring over INAUDIBLE so tat you can take pictures of San Lazaro

CH: And who is represented?

S13: Bacalao, Yemaya, Logipaguas…

CH: Oh, you have more…and the little action figures?

S13: Logimaguas (sp.)

CH: Oh like the Ibaichis (sp.) and down there?

S13: Oba, Ingi, Abata, there is Ochosi…let me open the other side…

CH: He's going to open the other side…and that finger…

S13: Here you have various Saints there like, Brumu, Brosia, and underneath is the branch of San Lazarus and on this side that I'm on is of San Lazarus. That's him.

CH: Hey the onion is growing. Does it have some significance?

S13: Yes the onion is the nutrient with which you condiment his foods.

CH: And your San Lazarus is all black huh?

S13: Yes, Palua.

CH: And the other side is for Elegua?

S13: That one here is Elegua.

CH: I recognized him because of all the candy.

S13: That's Timi (sp.) and Abata (sp.), the one on the left is Oya (sp.).

CH: And the Buddha, what significance does it have?

S13: Luck

CH: And that child?

S13: Ideu (sp.) he is the lost child of Ochun. The child that she lost

CH: and you have the 'El Nino de Atocha'

S13: Elegua.

CH: And the lady with many hands, I don't know what her name is.

S13: She is the goddess of life and above her is Jesus of Nazareth and a Batalou INAUDIBLE.

J: Lazaro, look at me…

TAPE ENDS HERE